

**Statement by Ambassador Philip Parham, Permanent Representative of
the United Kingdom Mission to the UN, at the Security Council Open
Briefing on UNOCA/Lord's resistance Army**

New York, 29 June 2012

Mr President, thank you very much for scheduling this important meeting of the Council, and let me begin also by thanking SRSG Abou Moussa for his briefing, and for the valuable contribution which he makes to peace and security in the central African region.

I also thank the African Union Special Envoy for the Lord's Resistance Army Issue, Ambassador Madeira, for his very helpful briefing this morning. His presence here today is a demonstration of the strong coordination between the United Nations and the African Union on this important topic. The United Kingdom encourages UNOCA to continue to coordinate the work of the UN, the AU and the LRA-affected states to counter the LRA threat.

Mr President, as Mr. Moussa and Ambassador Madeira have just reminded us, the LRA remains an unprincipled and violent threat to civilians across central Africa. The atrocities they commit have serious humanitarian and human rights consequences and Council members and SRSG Abou Moussa heard graphic account of these in an arria formula meeting last week with some of those directly involved in working with the victims. The United Kingdom condemns in the strongest terms the LRA's continued violations of international law and human rights law. The LRA's campaign has the potential to cause further instability in the DRC, South Sudan and the Central African Republic and to hamper the efforts of these countries to progress towards peace and security. Removing the threat of the LRA is important in terms of creating and consolidating a secure and stable environment in the affected countries.

Mr President, the release of the United Nations Regional Strategy on the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is a welcome step toward achieving that aim. The international community must now ensure that there is an appropriate and coordinated international response to the problem. We need a unified response from the LRA-affected countries, the African Union and the UN political, development, humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in these countries. In this regard, the United Kingdom welcomes the work which the African Union has undertaken towards the implementation of its Regional Task Force about which we have just heard from Ambassador Madeira. The United Kingdom urges the full deployment of troops across the region as soon as possible.

The UN's Regional Strategy must now be implemented fully and quickly. I encourage UNOCA to develop a costed implementation plan for the strategy, outlining priority actions, and articulating the results which will be achieved. It is important as soon as possible to identify, and explain to the broader donor community, the resource gaps.

The United Kingdom also commends the important work of the UN peacekeeping missions in protecting civilians. Continued and improved coordination and information sharing between these missions and with other stakeholders, will further enhance these efforts. This is why the United Kingdom has supported an increase in the capacity of the information cell in Northern DRC which will improve information exchange between the missions.

Mr. President, I am pleased to see that important work, such as the successful Demobilisation, Disarmament, Repatriation, Resettlement and Reintegration programme, is being expanded across the entire LRA affected region. I urge the United Nations to deliver consistent levels of support for this

programme across the region, as well as to assess and respond to recent changes to Amnesty laws in the region as far as they affect the programme.

Mr President, I now turn to UNOCA's wider role in other security issues across central Africa. The UK remains concerned about the increased levels of instability in the region. I welcome the enhanced regional collaboration to counter these threats, and would encourage expansion and intensification of this cooperation. UNOCA will have an important role to play in supporting upstream conflict prevention, by pre-empting tensions in the region and mediating between parties.

The UK also recognises the leadership the UN is showing on maritime security and the positive role played by Central African states. A coordinated regional response is important in this area too. In this regard we welcome the ECCAS and ECOWAS maritime security Memorandum of Understanding. Regional dialogue should look wider than just piracy and include illegal fishing, illegal oil bunkering, weapons, people and narcotics trafficking.

Lastly, I thank Council members for their support for the Presidential Statement, which the UK delegation has prepared and which you Mr President will shortly issue on the Council's behalf.

Thank you.